(i) Only category A & B items conforming to standards prescribed under Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, are issued to PDS.

(ii) Officers of the State Govt. or their representatives are allowed to check the quality of the foodgrains thoroughly at the time of receipt.

(iii) Sealed samples of foodgrains from the issuing lots are supplied by FCI to State Governments for displaying them at Fair Price Shops for the benefit of consumers.

(iv) Inspection of the Fair Price Shops is carried out by the officers of the State Governments and at times by the officers of Ministry of Food, Government of India to check the quality of foodgrains.

(v) FCI has been advised to keep sweepings of foodgrains in separate bags with distinct marking to avoid issue of such sweepings inadvertantly to the Fair Price Shops.

Setting UP of a Technology Bank

223. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry has suggested setting up of a technology bank to access Japanese Technology for Indian small and medium enterprises;

(b) if so, whether they have suggested that this will help a fresh deal in bringing Indian & Japanese SMEs closer to each other;

(c) if so, whether Government have approved this suggestion; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) An informal suggestion in this behalf was posed in the 19th meeting of the Indo-Japan Standing Committee's meeting held in Hakone in April, 1996.

(b) It has been indicated that this will help a great deal in bringing Indian and Japanese SMEs closer.

(c) The suggestion has not been posed to the Govt.

(d) Does not arise.

Projects set up with German collaboration

224. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the projects set up in diferent parts of the country in collaboration with Germany;

(b) the estimated cost and production capacity of each of these projects;

(c) whether Government have a proposal to set up any new project in collaboration with Germany; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (d) From 1991 to May 1996, the Government of India has approved 1114 collaborations with Germany, (including 480 financial collaborations) involving an equity participation of Rs. 2962.36 crores. Proposals for setting up new projects in collaboration with foreign countries, including Germany, continue to be received by the Government.

Problems faced by Paper Industry

225. SHRI AJIT P.K. JOGI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether paper industry in the country is at the verge of closure;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether paper industry has requested Government for announcing incentives for increasing investments and helping in generation of adequate additional capacity; and

(d) if so, Governments reaction thereto?